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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001814

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: FARDC 5TH BRIGADE BEGINS FIRST INTEGRATED MISSION
AGAINST FLDR

Classified By: PolOff TJNaber, reasons 1.4 b/d.

11. (C) The FARDC 5th Integrated Brigade of the 8th military region began its first mission, code-named North Nexus, against FDLR rebels in Virunga National Park, North Kivu, on October 31. Also for the first time FARDC took the lead, with MONUC providing planning and logistical assistance, in an operation against "negative forces" in the Kivu provinces. According to a MONUC officer, 13 FDLR rebels surrendered the first day and are now being screened by a MONUC DDRRR team for possible repatriation to Rwanda. Sources also state that five FDLR camps were destroyed. The mission, which could last two weeks, aims to evict such negative forces from the Rutshuru region of North Kivu.

12. (U) The press indicate that Mai Mai fighters, associated with the notorious "Jackson," are also being disrupted in the operation.

13. (C) According to DAO, General Amisi, head of the 5th Brigade, is committed to the eviction mission and has instructed his junior leadership of the mission's importance. DAO said that Virunga National Park is most likely home to small operational bases, not large ones as found to the west in Walikale. If the FDLR rebels are pushed out of the park, according to DAO, it is possible they will flee to the south and take revenge on civilians.

14. (C) Comment: This is the first military operation involving an integrated FARDC brigade in either North or South Kivu, and, with the FARDC units apparently in the lead, it has been the desired model for Kivu operations for a long time. We (the U.S., CIAT, and Joint Security Commission members) have been pressing the Congolese for some time to deploy integrated brigades and use them against rebels in the east. While it is unrealistic to expect too much from troops who are still not regularly paid or fed, such an offensive operation by the FARDC in the Kivus is welcome news.
MEECE